

POPIISH IMPOSTOR:

A NARRATIVE.

Faithfully Translated from the Original Manuscript.

Setting forth the Frauds and Artifices of the
Romish Clergy, to impose upon the LAITY.

With Explanatory NOTES.

By a Country CURATE.

*Here they each Week their constant Auctions hold,
Of Reliques, which by Candle's Inch are sold;
These are the Fathers Implements and Tools,
Their gaudy Trangums for inveigling Fools:
These serve for Baits the Simple to ensnare,
Like Children spirited with Toys at Fair.*

OLDHAM:



L O N D O N:

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POPISH IMPOSTOR



IN A LETTER FROM THE
SECRETARY OF THE
SOCIETY OF THE
SACRAMENT

TO THE
MEMBERS OF THE
SOCIETY OF THE
SACRAMENT

PRINTED BY
THE SOCIETY OF THE
SACRAMENT

To the READER.



THOUGH at present an obscure Country Curate, I have had the Honour to make the Tour of Italy with a great Man; and now and then to alleviate a heavy Hour I travel that delightful Country over again in my Imagination; what amazing Scenes appear! How stupendous the Works of Nature! How exquisite the Performances of Art! and whilst among the noble Remains of ancient Sculpture I am reviewing an Elder or a Younger SCIPIO AFRICANUS, a MÆCENAS, or a TULLY, with secret Joy I reflect upon the happy Vicissitude, that BRITANNIA is now the Magna Parens Virum, and glorys in a MARLBOROUGH, and an ARGYLE, a DORSET, and a HARDWICKE: As I am thus amusing myself, methinks I see my Patron in Raptures beholding the * Venus of Medici, and hear his very Words, O! (he cry'd) how many animated Beauties may we admire at an Opera, or a Birth-night Ball! But to leave to him and other young Gentlemen the Pleasure of comparing British Ladies with the charming Cyprian Dame, it better suits my Age and Profession, as well as present Purpose, to draw a Parallel between Heathen and Christian Rome; and shew how the Religion of the one resembles that of the other.

Before I was in Orders I own I went to a Play sometimes, and have been exceedingly delighted with GAY's What d'ye call it, as it is a fine Ridicule of some of our Top Dramatic Pieces, the Scene of the Justices is a very humorous Allusion to the Taste of the Town in Shakespear's Time; the People lov'd to be frighten'd, and the Poet turn'd Conjuror to please 'em; a Ghost their Worships must have by all Means; nothing would go down without a Ghost; so in Religion, before the Appearance of our Saviour the World in general (Jew and Gentile) was fond of Sacrifices; and therefore, that the new Revelation might take the better, it is conjectured that Transubstantiation, or the Unbloody Sacrifice of the Mass, was contriv'd, the utmost Stretch, the Ne plus ultra of Human Invention, and were the Generations of Men eternal, it could never be exceeded; from its seeming Expediency some would infer that this Doctrine was introduc'd very
(early

* A celebrated Statue of that Goddess in the Great Duke's Gallery at Florence.

early, and they have a Tradition in the Church of Rome that St. Peter us'd to celebrate with the Pater-Noster, and the Words of the Sacrament only, believe all this who will; but had they told us the Pontifical Vestments were very plain, we could without any Scruple assent to that; for without doubt all the pompous Decorations of this Grand ——— have been since added by his pretended Successors, who have indeed reviv'd Architecture, Sculpture and Painting by their poppish Imitation of Paganism; but, a-lack-a-day, can their Restoring of these Arts be any Attonement for the corrupting of the Christian Religion?

Canonization is the Apotheosis, and the Saints of modern Rome owe their Preferment to the *Dii Indigetes* of the Ancient.

Whatever the Romanists may urge from the Maccabees and I know not what Apocryphal Scripture, 'tis evident the Hint of Purgatory is taken from Virgil's Sixth *Æneid*, in which Anchises describes to his Son *Æneas* the State of departed Souls in the following Lines,

Non tamen omne malum miseris, nec funditus omnes
Corporeæ excedunt Pestes, penitusq; necesse est,
Multa diu concreta modis inolescere miris,
Ergo exercentur *Panis*, veterumq; malorum
Supplicia expendant, aliæ panduntur inanes
Suspensæ ad ventos, aliis sub Gurgite vasto
Infectum eluitur Scelus, aut exurit Igni.

Aut exurit Igni, Here is the very Purgation we are speaking of, and the Popish Priests have artfully improv'd it into an admirable Kitchen Fire, which makes the Pot boil finely.

I could go on, and trace the Resemblance through the whole System, but these Instances in the most essential Articles may suffice; and, I will not any longer detain the Reader from the Narrative itself: If it be objected that the Translation is too ludicrous, I answer, that as the Popish Priests have made a Farce of the Christian Religion, it is but just to make a Farce of them again; besides, to please while he instructs ought to be the Aim of every Writer, as Horace says,

Omne tulit Punctum qui miscuit Utile Dulci,
Lectorem delectando, pariterque monendo.



THE
POPISH IMPOSTOR.



OCCACE, the Scourge of lech'rous Monk,
Intriguing Priest, and wanton Punk,
Of a sly Friar tells this Story,
Which I will try to lay before ye :

His Name will not run soft in Rhime,
E'en *P-pe* himself can't make it chime.

* CIPOLLA is beyond the Skill
Of the great Sov'reign of the Quill.
I ask'd the † *Laureat* his Opinion,
If I may call him *Father Onion*,
Our Judge declares the Law allows,
(Let no one therefore knit his Brows)

B

In

* *CIPOLLA is beyond the Skill*] This was the Friar's Name, which
luckily happens to be *Italian* for an Onion.

† *I ask'd the Laureat his Opinion*] 'Tis no small Satisfaction to be supported
by so great an Authority,

In Cases of Poetic Cramp,
Old Words to change, or new ones stamp.

He was of St. *Antonio's* Troupe
Who rarely eat a *maigre Soupe*,
And plump, tho' of the dapper Size,
With yellow Hair and leering Eyes ;
Of *Latin* he had just a Smack,
At Preaching a most clever Knack ;
So that his Sermons, let me tell ye,
Would melt a Heart of Stone to Jelly ;
And when to Char'ty he exhorted,
He ne'er with empty Hand departed.
His, Abbot not to let a Brother
In drowsy Cell his Talent smother,
To those who had the Saint's Protection,
Sent him full oft to make Collection ;
And now unto * *Certaldo* Village,
(For Pasture fam'd and not for Tillage)
And that he might succeed the better
Equipp'd him with a † *Past'ral Letter*.

THE

* *And now unto Certaldo Village*] This Village is in *Tuscany*, where our Historian was born ; so he might the better answer for the Truth of this Narrative.

† *Equipp'd him with a Past'ral Letter*] A Friend of mine will shortly oblige the learned World with a Dissertation upon the *Nature, Use, and Intent* of Pastoral Letters.

THE Nuncio having got his Warrant,
 Away he trots upon his Errand ;
 And after shewing his Credentials,
 He thus proceeds upon Essentials.
 I joy, Beloved, that you thrive,
 You are the happy'st Folks alive,
 Thus guarded by our holy *Tony*,
 For his Elect we gladly own ye ;
 Your Cows with Calf, your Sows with Pig,
 (And thus he runs his Popish Rig)
 Great, very great, your Obligations,
 So pray be large in your Oblations:
 But to inforce this Duty stricter,
 This Ev'ning I design a Lecture,
 In which by Logic not fallacious
 I'll prove your Off'rings efficacious
 To save the Soul of vilest Sinner ;
 But now enough — let's hie to Dinner.
 By all means here I must relate
 A Circumstance of Moment great.
 To mark his Love, the Ghostly Father
 Promis'd to shew his Babes a Feather,
 Pluck'd from the Courtly Angel's Wing,
 Who did the gracious Message bring,
 And

And made that Heav'nly Salutation,
 Which op'd the way to Man's Salvation.
 Two graceless Rogues who smelt a Rat,
 (And had contriv'd it very pat)
 Whilst Father *Onion* stuffs his Belly,
 And after Soupe of Vermicelli,
 Now sticks his Teeth in Pidgeon roasted.
 Unto his Inn these Varlets posted,
 Up Stairs they whip, unseen by any,
 For luckily the Friar's * Zanny
 Was in the Kitchen smuggling *Nanny*.
 † Nor *Guccio* nor his greasy *Nancy*
 Can ever please an *English* Fancy;
 Our Isle produces no such Loobies,
 Nor any Wenches with such Bubbies.

Now

* For luckily the Friar's Zanny] I confess that in the Original the Word is *Fante*, which signifies a Servant; and indeed, *Zanni*, or a Buffoon, is inconsistent with the Gravity of the Subject; 'tis making a Mountebank and a Merry-Andrew of the Nuncio and his Valet; however, I hope the Criticks will not censure my rendering it thus, as too ludicrous, and bordering upon the Profane, but rather commiserate the Slavery of Rhime. I desire *Boileau* may plead for me, and that these Gentlemen would read his second Satire, *Sur la difficulté de trouver la Rime, & de la faire accorder avec la Raison*; from whence I have, in regard to my Readers in general, transcrib'd the following Lines.

*Si je pense exprimer un Auteur sans Defaut,
 La Raison dit Virgile, & la Rime Quinaut.*

Which may be thus imitated,

*Wou'd we a Patriot praise averse to Wiles,
 Reason names B---d, and the Rhime says E---s.*

† Nor *Guccio*, nor his greasy *Nancy*] Here is a tedious disagreeable Description of *Guccio* (which the Reader perceives is the Name of the Nuncio's Valet) and his Fatty; and therefore I omit it.

Now see these Younkers how they rummage,
 And laughing search the Father's Baggage:
 A little Box, ('tis hard to tell it)
 Involv'd in Silk, lay in a Wallet.
 Find it they did, and in an instant,
 (Old Nick was surely their Assistant)
 Eager they open it, and espy
 A Feather Gaudy to the Eye:
 It had a Parrot's Tail adorn'd,
 That in its Pride the Rainbow scorn'd.
 ' Is this (they cry) the Angel's Pinion,
 ' O what a Bite is *Father Onion!*
 O'erjoy'd they seize it, and to ban
 The Friar, in the Box they cram
 Some Coals that in a Corner lay;
 All set to rights they slip away.

Now it was buzz'd among these Bumkins,
 Who only Melons knew from Pumkins,
 The wond'rous Thing they were to see,
 And so to Church they croud with Glee.
 The Man of God, being replete
 With the good Creature, (as 'tis meet)

Had ta'en a Nap, and now prepares
 To enter on Divine Affairs.
 The Wallets are by *Guccio* brought
 In order, he suspected nought;
 The Bell rings in, away he goes,
 Intent with Popish Fraud t'impose
 Upon these simple Certaldefi,
 Than which there nothing was more easy.

Lo! he the Pulpit mounts, and bangs,
 And with great Fervour thus harangues :
 ' *St. Anthony*, so great in Heaven,
 ' His Favour unto you has giv'n :
 ' Look on your Kine, they are not stunted,
 ' And fatter Hogs (sure) never grunted :
 ' 'Tis he defends each Dog and Bitch,
 ' With Man and Woman from the Itch.
 ' This I am sent to signify,
 ' And by my Habit 'tis no Lye.
 ' But to confirm and make appear
 ' The Matter still more plain and clear,
 ' I'll now produce a sacred Reliek,
 ' (A certain Cure of Fits Hysterick)

' This

' This by the Bye ——— but pray be humble,
 ' And prostrate on your Faces tumble ———
 ' Now rise again ——— repeat the Creed ———
 ' Light up two Torches, as there's need ;
 ' Lift up your Eyes, your Voices raise,
 ' And joyn with me in *Gabriel's Praise* ;
 ' He *Legate a Latere* was sent
 ' To *Mary* with a Compliment,
 ' Which did with Love divine inflame
 ' The ever blessed glorious Dame ;
 ' For in this Box I have a Feather,
 ' Pull'd from one Wing of his, but whether
 ' From Right or Left I am not sure,
 ' And Lying I could ne'er endure.
 Here we'll admire his steady Face,
 The Box he opens with a Grace ;
 No Feather ——— only Coals he sees ———
 ' Bless me! (he mutters) how came these !
 However, without Blush or Pause,
 The *Papist* Trickster boldly draws
 Himself out of a Scrape, that might
 Confound an over-modest Wight ;
 The Box he shuts, and with a Mien
 So sanctify'd, and so serene,

Says he, ' The Ways of Providence
 ' Are not perceiv'd by human Sense;
 ' They often are perplex'd in Mazes,
 ' Which Man no more than Beast that grazes
 ' Can e'er find out, tho' I can prove
 ' That Things are wisely rul'd above.

' ATTEND, good People, hear this Truth,
 ' I've travel'd from my early Youth;
 ' To bragging I was ne'er inclin'd,
 ' With *Prefter John*, 'tis true, I din'd,
 ' And did confess ('tis some Years since)
 ' That pious *Abyssinian* Prince;
 ' I pass'd a Country, wide indeed!
 ' It makes my very Heart to bleed,
 ' To think the People are all Liars,
 ' And in great Numbers Priests and Friars:
 ' But not to keep you on the Tenters
 ' With any more of these Adventures,
 ' I now shall tell you what will fit ye;
 ' I visited the holy City;
 ' The Patriarch and I were Cronies,
 ' Just like two Brothers of our *Tony's*.

' Not

• Nor David Jonathan cou'd hug

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Ingens Hiatus in M. S.

Such was the Bishop's Love to me,

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• • • • •
• • • • •

Alter Hiatus in M. S.
etiam valde defendus

• This Prelate was both learn'd and wise,

• We talk'd o'er all the Mysteries

• Of our most holy Faith, he found

• Me in those Matters very found ;

• Altho' to Jews it does seem odd,

• The Doctrine of a Triune God,

• And the mysterious Incarnation,

• The darkest Points of Revelation,

• I can clear up with as much Ease,

• As one of you can prune his Trees.

D

• But

- ' But this to you imports not much;
 ' Sufficient 'tis you trust the Church
 ' This Pontiff all his sacred Treasure
 ' Pour'd out before me without measure :
 ' What precious Things did I behold !
 ' Not in a Day can they be told ;
 ' I mention those of greatest Merit,
 ' A Finger of the Holy Spirit ;
 ' A Toe-Nail of a Cherubim,
 ' († To which I have compos'd a Hymn :)
 ' ‡ A Seraph's Ciuffo with Surprise,
 ' And Pleasure also struck my Eyes ;

And

† *To which I have compos'd a Hymn*] If there's any Truth in this, the Clergy of that Century are highly to be commended for employing themselves in Spiritual Exercises ; it seems they meddled not in Politics : They had no *R Z* amongst 'em. ---- Here the Reader perceives I point at a Brother, dignify'd in the Church, and distinguish'd in the *Gazetteer* ; I say, distinguish'd in the *Gazetteer*, as the *Only Labourer* in that Vineyard worthy of his Hire ; the *Only Writer* that has any Wit or Learning amongst 'em. Never, sure, was such Council retain'd before ; and there is no accounting for it now, but by supposing that these miserable Advocates have some Friends who are in the great Man's Confidence, from whom he has taken their Characters upon Trust, and is not aware of the Mischief they do him ; tho' perhaps their stupid Apologies have hurt him more with the People than the witty Invectives of the *Craftsman* and *Common-Sense*. What a Lump is that same *Doh Ralpho de Dismato Scriblers longo di Nullo*, alias *Ralph Freeman*, Esq;

---- rudis, indigestaque moles,
 Nec quicquam nisi Pondus iners. ----

These Things are out of my way ; but one Day, at our Post-house, a certain Motion coming upon me, I ask'd for some Waste-Paper, and the Cook put their last *Gazetteer* into my Hand : Upon which, said I, Child, Dost know what thou hast giv'n me here ? Yes, (reply'd the Wench) mighty well, Sir, we have these Papers every Post but not a Soul reads 'em ; they lye about here ; sometimes I singe a Fowl with them ; and Gentlemen frequently use 'em *as you may do this, if you please*.

‡ *A Seraph's Ciuffo with Surprise*] This Word has (I own) given me a great deal of Inquietude ; my Printer would have had me by all Means call it a *Touper*, a

Spencer,

- And of the Word I view'd a Rib,
- † With *Cath'rine* of *Sienna's* Bib.
- How was I dazzel'd with a Ray,
- Of that bright Star which led the Way
- Unto the Magi, who ador'd
- In Stable vile, our Heav'nly Lord !
- ‡ Of *Michael's* Sweat there was a Vial,
- When of his Strength he made a Trial,
- And fought so bravely with the Devil ;
- The Lord defend us all from Evil.
- Tho' none of us were at his Bur'ing,
- Yet he was dead as any Herring ;

When

Spencer, or a Major ; because any modish Appellation of that kind could not fail to please all the pretty Fellows, and make my Narrative sell the better ; but I consider'd, that the more mature in Age and Metaphysics would be terribly shock'd at an Expression so gross and inconsistent with our refin'd Ideas of Intellectual Beings ; and indeed my chief Dependance is upon these grave Gentlemen, as it is a religious Subject that I am handling ; for Men seldom grow in Grace till they grow in Years ; and Religion has not many Votaries amongst the Young God knows : But as we wax old, and our Earthly Tabernacle decays, we begin to think of a Building not made with Hands, Eternal in the Heavens, just as People are wont to look out for a new House when the old one is tumbling about their Ears, or the Lease expiring.

† *With Cath'rine of Sienna's Bib*] This young Maiden was a Dyer's Daughter of *Sienna*, of whom there is a Legend stuff'd with Stories of our Saviour's making Love to her, which are too gross for a Protestant Ear.

‡ *Of Michael's Sweat there was a Vial*] A late Traveller tells us of a Vial of this Archangel's Sweat, which is deposited in the Vatican for the Use of the Popes, their Nephews, and Favourites, as an infallible Sudorific ; and that Cardinal *Cesica* had the Benefit of an Unction in the late *Benedict's* Pontificate. It may be this very Vial, or another ; and I will not dogmatically affirm there is no such ; though I declare I was at *Rome* above a Twelvemonth, and often at the Vatican, but I never saw any thing like it.

— credat longævous Apelles,

Non ego —

See the Travels of the young Connoisseur, embellish'd here at home by the Father from Original Drawings, &c.

' When Jesus call'd him from the Grave,
 ' To manifest his Pow'r to save,
 ' Of *Lazarus* I speak, his Jaw
 ' Shall close th' Account of what I saw.

' I OWN I was in some Confusion
 ' To make Returns for this Profusion ;
 ' And as a Sign of Gratitude,
 ' The genuine Manuscripts of *Jude*,
 ' And of the Song of *Solomon*,
 ' Which the good Man did doat upon.
 ' I gave him, but, he far out-strip'd me,
 ' When he so generously tip'd me
 ' Reliques that are beyond all Price ;
 ' Among 'em is one of the Dice,
 ' Which did decide the great Contest,
 ' Who was to have our Saviour's Vest.
 ' Methinks it tinkles in my Ear,
 ' I wish to God I had it here,
 ' A Vial fill'd with Sound o' th' Bells,
 ' (Don't fancy these are Bagate'lls)
 ' That did in the first Temple chime,
 ' And have been melted a long Time.

• Of

' Of *Gabriel's* Feather I have spoken;
 ' As of our Love a tender Token;
 ' Some of the Coals I also boast;
 ' That did the holy *Laurence* roast.
 ' Now here observe how Heav'n directs,
 ' And mortal Man in vain reflects;
 ' The Plume so pleasing to behold,
 ' A Box in Sarl'net wrapt doth hold;
 ' And in another, (God thrive my Sins)
 ' As like unto't as can be Twins,
 ' The Coals are put, and here I see
 ' The Hand of God has guided me,
 ' In taking now the Box of Coals,
 ' As they will edify your Souls,
 ' More than the Feather at this juncture;
 ' So that I feel not the least Puncture
 ' Of Sorrow; nay, I do rejoice,
 ' And thank the Lord with grateful Voice,
 ' Since 'tis a blest Mistake; for after
 ' Two Days, the Feast of that great Martyr
 ' Comes on; and therefore pray draw near,
 ' With Awe profound these Coals revere.

' Bow down your Heads in Adoration
 ' Of the All-wise Administration,
 ' For Providence (I can't but say)
 ' Has greatly shewn itself to Day,
 ' These very Coals I am to tell ye,
 ' By th' Fat that dripped from the Belly,
 ' Of suff'ring *Laurence* were extinguish'd;
 ' Nor can they ever be diminish'd;
 ' Your Mem'ries I wont incumber,
 ' Tho' all their Virtues I can't number.
 ' They certainly preserve from Fire,
 ' And That we can't too much admire:
 ' Come let me cross each Mother's Child,
 ' You ne'er by me shall be beguil'd;
 ' If in a Twelvemonth you are sing'd,
 ' I' th' Flames of Hell may I be ting'd.
 Thus he went on with Elocution,
 T' excite a lib'ral Contribution:
 Who cou'd refrain from laughing loud,
 To see the ign'rant silly Croud,
 So eager to be cross'd that they,
 Till he came down wou'd hardly stay:

There

There was not any one Curmudgeon,
 Who did not now become a Gudgeon.
 'Twas like unto *St. Peter's* Haul,
 † For ev'ry Cross he got a Paul,
 And feigning thus to be mistaken,
 He sav'd most cleverly his Bacon.

† For ev'ry Cross he got a Paul] It may be necessary to inform some of my Readers, that a Paul Giulio is an *Italian* Coin, in Value equal to Six-pence. If *Father Onion* was a Bite, what must we call the *Georgia* Apostle? What was the Collection at *Certaldo*, if compar'd with that upon *Kennington Common*? The Friar carry'd off, perhaps, twenty Pounds; the *Enthusiast* a Hundred times Twenty, a Brace of Thousands; and what is still worse, frightened his Benefactors out of their Senses; for at this very Hour there are Numbers of them raving in *Bedlam* and private Mad-Houses, whereas the other was an innocent Delusion: *Cipolla's* Bubbles went home not only easy but highly delighted. The Bite of a Tarantula (they say) is best cur'd by Fiddling; and if that mischievous Animal, *Whitefield*, lives to come back again (tho' it is to be wish'd for the sake of the common People that he may not) I'll handle this horrid Seducer in my way, and try to laugh his Followers out of their Frenzy; tho' I am really griev'd that any amongst us should be so weak as to be led away by him, or his dear and honoured Friend, as the vain Creature calls his impious Coadjutor *J—W—*. The Ignorance | the Impudence of these Wretches! to presume to censure one of the greatest Ornaments of our Church, *A—p Tillotson*, and the most excellent of all moral Treatises, The whole Duty of Man; Wo unto thee O *Whitefield*! Wo unto thee O *Wesley*! Verrily I say unto you, it will be more tolerable for *Toland* and *Tindal* at the Day of Judgment, than for you: Then your Pride and Iniquity will have their Reward; Then shall that just, tho' terrible Sentence, be pronounced against you, as the most execrable of all Impostors, Depart from me ye Cursed into everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels.

F I N I S.

